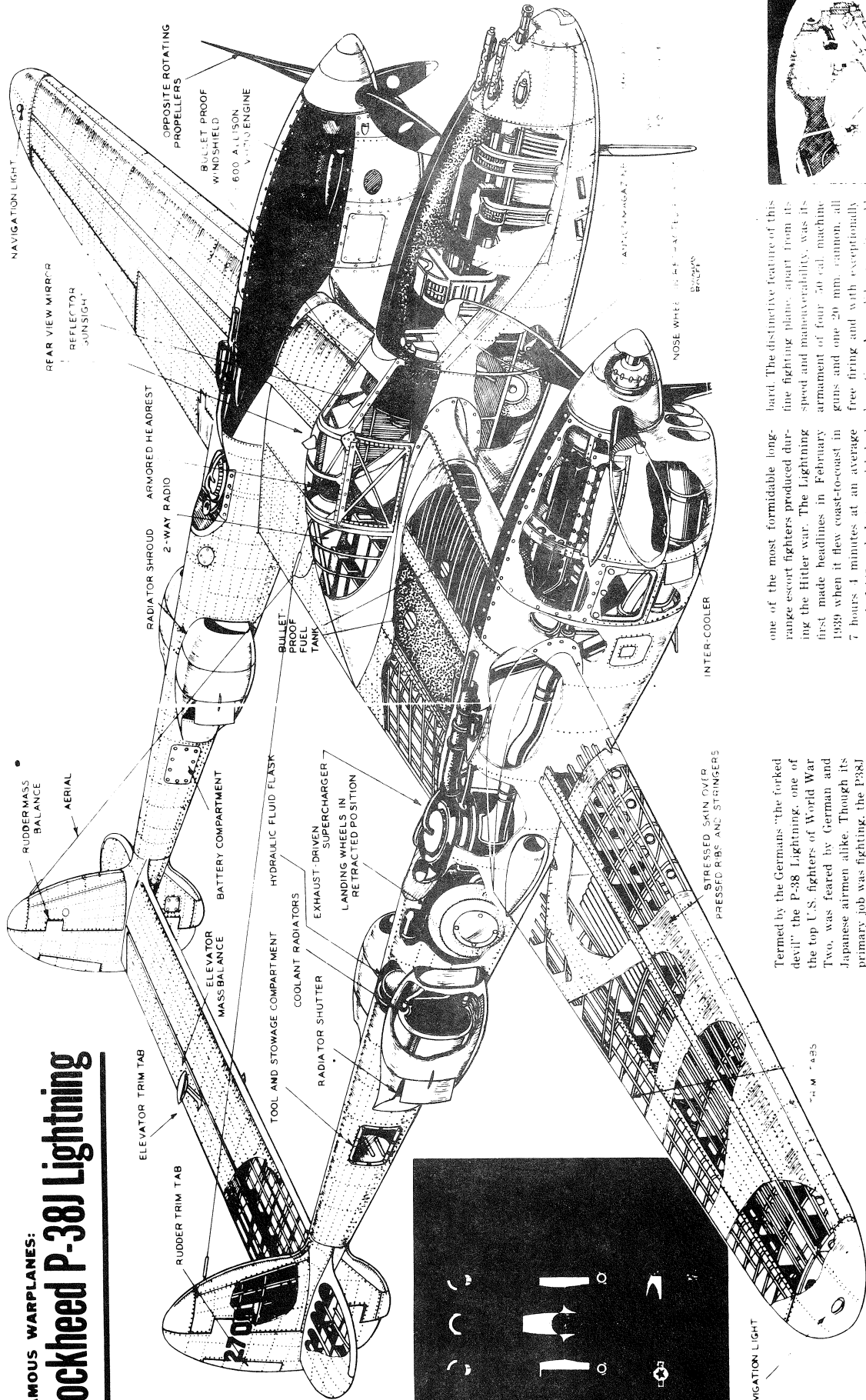


FAMOUS WARPLANES: Lockheed P-38J Lightning



SPECIFICATIONS
 WING SPAN, 52 FEET
 LENGTH, 37 FEET 10 INCHES
 HEIGHT, 12 FEET 10 INCHES
 WEIGHT, 10,000 POUNDS
 MAX. SPEED, 425 MPH PLUS
 SERVICE CEILING, 40,000 FT.

**POWERPLANT: TWO LIQUID
 COOLED 1,600-HP ALLISON
 V-1710 ENGINES, 50 CAL.
 ARMS: FOUR .50 CAL.
 MACHINE GUNS, ONE
 FREE-FIRING M/GUN, ONE
 20-MM CANNON, SIX
 ROCKET LAUNCHERS**

Termed by the Germans "the forked devil," the P-38 Lightning, one of the top U.S. fighters of World War Two, was feared by German and Japanese airmen alike. Though its primary job was fighting, the P-38J was equally useful as a bomber (totting some 4,000 pounds of bombs), a photo-reconnaissance plane and even as a glider tug. Equipped with drop tanks it was

one of the most formidable long-range escort fighters produced during the Hitler war. The Lightning first made headlines in February 1939 when it flew coast-to-coast in 7 hours 4 minutes at an average speed of 340-mph. Later models had a top speed of over 425-mph. The P-38J was the 16th modification of the Lightning and was the brain child of Chief Engineer Hal Hibbard. The distinctive feature of this fine fighting plane, apart from its speed and maneuverability, was its armament of four .50 cal. machine guns and one 20 mm. cannon, all free firing and with exceptionally long time. As a glider tug it could not only tow one 15-seat glider or three smaller jobs, but after the release it could stick around and defend them.—*Douglas Redt.*



Photo reconnaissance version of P-38J was equipped with camera replacing guns. The P-38 with 11-merak replacing guns.